

Special September 2016

Legal Aid News is your official regular communication from Legal Aid Services on all matters related to legal aid. *Legal Aid News* is generally published in the last week of every month.

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Changes to the administration of granting and debt management

As part of the Ministry's move to continually improve services for our customers we are changing the way we administer legal aid.

The first phase of this transformation, involved closing our three smallest offices (Hamilton, Whangarei and Dunedin) in 2015 to improve the consistency and standardisation of our legal aid granting functions.

Having reviewed the way we administer granting and debt management, we will be moving to a new operating model that will optimise our processes for both granting and debt management. It will also build the foundation for future technology advancements and digitisation.

The changes involve reducing granting offices from eight to two in Takapuna and Wellington.

We will also be creating an organisational structure focussed on national delivery of legal aid services.

As a result you can expect greater consistency in granting decisions. You can also be assured that existing knowledge and capability will be consolidated.

To continue to deliver quality legal aid services the office consolidations will be phased in from late January to late June 2017. The information in the diagram below explains how we are changing the way we work and the timeframe for making the changes.

We will keep you informed of developments.

Queries?

If you have queries about any article in this newsletter, please contact legalaidsnews@justice.govt.nz.

LEGAL AID – Changing the way we work

A national approach to delivering legal aid granting and debt functions more efficiently and providing the foundation for future digital services

CONTEXT

The Ministry of Justice’s mission is to deliver modern, accessible, people-centred justice services.

The new operating model for both the granting and debt management functions supports this commitment to modernising services for customers.

KEY CHANGES

Consolidating

Consolidating the granting functions from 8 offices into 2 – Takapuna and Wellington

Improving efficiency

Delivering a nationally consistent service that is efficient and effective

Optimising processes and new ways of working

Using technology

Optimising legal aid granting and debt to prepare for technology advancements and digitisation

WHAT THE CHANGES MEAN

For customers

Faster movement through the legal aid system
Continue to access Legal Aid Services by 0800 2 LEGAL AID (0800 253 425)

For providers

Consistency in granting decisions
Existing knowledge and capability consolidated
New relationships and different contact details

For employees

New operating structure including:

- 2 new service delivery manager positions to drive a nationally consistent end-to-end process
- new team manager positions focussed on leading and developing staff
- a clearly defined career path for grants staff

